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Sexual experience, sexual stimuli and leisure behavior of male and female youths in a vocational college

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Objective : *To examine the sexual experience, sexual stimuli and leisure behavior of male and female youths.*

Setting : *The vocational college in Samut Songkhram Province.*

Research design : *A cross-sectional survey*

Material : *A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. It was designed to assess three areas: sexual experience, sexual stimuli and leisure behavior.*

Methods : *Research was conducted in August-September, 1996. 636 youth samples (393 males, 243 females) were classified by a systematically random sampling technique from all of the youths in one vocational college. The subjects were chosen from every fifth order (1,5,9....) of the registration book in each educational year. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the subjects for self assessment. X^2 -test or Fisher's Exact Test and T-test were used to test statistical significance between male and female youths.*

Results : *The results revealed that 17.9% of the male and 3.7% of the female*

youths have had intercourse and this was a significant difference ($p < 0.0001$). The average age at first intercourse for males was 12 years and for females was 15 years. 22.1% of the male youth had first intercourse with a prostitute. The motivating pressure for first intercourse of 51.5% of the males and 50% of the females was close friend/relative and alcohol drinking, respectively. 50% of both sexes used condoms during their first intercourse. 60% of the males and 3.4% of the females had sexual release but the more popular channels for sexual release was masturbation, exercise, and music with 45.7% of the males and 37.5% of the females. Contraception was regularly used by 41.4% of the males and 77.8% of the females youth. 71% of the males used condoms while the females used pills or a safe period. 6.1% of the male youths (3 cases) had been infected with STDs but none of the female youths had been sexual stimuli, male and female youths had significant differences with sexual desire and alcohol drinking ($p < 0.0001$). Sports was the common diversion behavior in 33.3% of the males while watching television was found in 47.1% of the females and this is of significant difference for both sexes ($p < 0.0001$). This study showed that it is necessary to provide knowledge of condom usage to youths.

Conclusion : One-fifth of the sample have had intercourse and the percentage was higher in the male more than the female around five times. Half of them used condoms at first time and nowadays it was used by the two-third of the male. Sexual stimuli-sexual desire and alcohol drinking-differed between the two sexes. Leisure behavior of male was sports but of female was watching television.

Key words : Youth sexual experience, Youth sexual stimuli, Youth leisure behavior.

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พูนสุข ช่วยทอง, เจตน์สันต์ แต่งสุวรรณ, อนงค์นาฏ เหลี่ยมสมบัติ. ประสบการณ์ทางเพศ สิ่งกระตุ้นทางเพศ และการใช้เวลาว่างของเยาวชนชายและหญิงในวิทยาลัยเทคนิค. จุฬาลงกรณ์เวชสาร 2541 มี.ค.;42(3): 183-95

วัตถุประสงค์ : เพื่อศึกษาประสบการณ์ทางเพศ สิ่งกระตุ้นทางเพศ และงานอดิเรกของ เยาวชนชายและหญิง

สถานที่ศึกษา : วิทยาลัยเทคนิค ที่จังหวัดสมุทรสงคราม

รูปแบบการวิจัย : การสำรวจชนิดตัดขวาง

เครื่องมือที่ใช้ : ใช้แบบสอบถามชนิดตอบด้วยตนเอง ประกอบด้วยคำถาม 3 ส่วนคือ ประสบการณ์ทางเพศ สิ่งกระตุ้นทางเพศ และงานอดิเรก

วิธีการ : ทำการวิจัยช่วงเดือนสิงหาคม - กันยายน 2539 กลุ่มตัวอย่างมี 636 คน เป็นชาย 393 คน และหญิง 243 คน เลือกตัวอย่างโดยการสุ่มเป็นระบบ จากบัญชีรายชื่อนักศึกษาทุกแผนกวิชาในแต่ละชั้นปี ตามลำดับที่ 1,5,9... แจกแบบสอบถามและให้กลุ่มตัวอย่างตอบด้วยตนเอง วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยใช้ X^2 -test หรือ Fisher's Exact test และ T-test ทดสอบหาความแตกต่างระหว่างเยาวชนชาย และหญิง

ผลการศึกษา : เยาวชนชายและหญิง เคยมีเพศสัมพันธ์ร้อยละ 17.9 และ 3.7 ตามลำดับ ซึ่งมีความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ ($p < 0.0001$) อายุต่ำสุดเมื่อมีเพศสัมพันธ์ครั้งแรกของเยาวชนชายและหญิง คือ 12 ปี และ 15 ปี ตามลำดับ เยาวชนชาย ร้อยละ 22.1 มีเพศสัมพันธ์ครั้งแรกกับโสเภณี แรก ผลักดันให้มีเพศสัมพันธ์ครั้งแรก ร้อยละ 51.5 ของเยาวชนชายเกิดจากเพื่อนสนิท และญาติ ส่วนเยาวชนหญิงร้อยละ 50 (3 ราย) เกิดจากการดื่มสุรา ครั้งหนึ่งของเยาวชนชายและหญิงใช้ถุงยางอนามัยเมื่อมีเพศสัมพันธ์ครั้งแรก เยาวชนชาย ร้อยละ 60 และเยาวชนหญิง ร้อยละ 3.4 เคยระบายความต้องการทางเพศ โดยเยาวชนชาย ร้อยละ 45.7 และเยาวชนหญิง ร้อยละ 37.5 ใช้วิธีสำเร็จความใคร่ให้ตนเอง/ออกกำลังกาย/เล่นดนตรี เยาวชนชายร้อยละ 6.1 เคยเป็นโรคติดต่อทางเพศสัมพันธ์ ส่วนเยาวชนหญิงไม่เคยเป็น เยาวชนชายและหญิงมีความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญในเรื่องความต้องการทางเพศและการดื่มสุรา ($p < 0.0001$) ร้อยละ 33.3 ของเยาวชนชายใช้เวลาว่างในการเล่นกีฬา ขณะที่ ร้อยละ 47.1 ของเยาวชนหญิงใช้ในการดูทีวี ซึ่งมีความแตกต่างกันอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ ($p < 0.0001$) ผลการศึกษานี้แสดงถึงความจำเป็นของการให้ความรู้แก่เยาวชนเรื่องการใช้ถุงยางอนามัย

Sexuality begins during infancy and early childhood, and principles are also developing at that time. The foundation of all sexual knowledge is being established at a time when the child has very limited intellectual skills, yet this training will ultimately be utilized in all subsequent sexual interactions. Therefore, the quality of sexual training at the point where the cognitive structure is being created is important. Moreover, crucial factors patterning sexual lifestyles are ranges of constraints (sanctions, taboo protections) and opportunities (contacts, exposures, freedoms) which revolve around social norms in any given social situation.⁽¹⁾ As a result, it is interesting to study the pattern of the gender variations pertaining to sexuality. The objective of this research was to examine the nature of male and female youths in sexual experience, sexual stimuli and leisure behavior. Its implications will be used in planning for strategies to prevent sexual health problems for young people.

Materials and Methods

A self-administered questionnaire packet consisting of three different measures was approved for use by the superintendents in the vocational college. The 14-item self-report questionnaires were designed to assess three areas: sexual experience (intercourse, age at first intercourse, first intercourse with whom, pressure for first intercourse, condom use at first intercourse,

sexual release, channels for sexual release, contraceptive use, contraception method and Sexual Transmitted Diseases), sexual stimuli (sexual desire, being in love, being the opposite sex of a special close friend and alcohol drinking) and leisure behavior. 711 of the samples were calculated with the incidence rate of the youths have had intercourse in the previous study (20%).⁽²⁾ They were represented 23% of 3,064 students. Therefore, we adjusted to 25% of the total population (766 cases).

Survey Samples and Administration

In August-September, 1996, we surveyed a sample of 25% of the youths ($n = 766$) at one vocational college (Samut Songkhram). At the time, 3,064 students (1,830 males and 1,234 females) were enrolled. As shown in figure 1, the study population was every fifth student registered in every course and grade or educational year. Therefore, the sample size had 25% of the male and female students. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the students for self assessment. The time spent for assessment and collecting data was about 30-45 minutes. We excluded respondents if the questionnaire was answered nonsensically or if the questionnaire was blank (130 cases). The remaining 636 youths (393 males; 243 females) comprised the study sample and represented 20% of the original sample population. (Table 1)

Figure 1. The sampling frame of the study

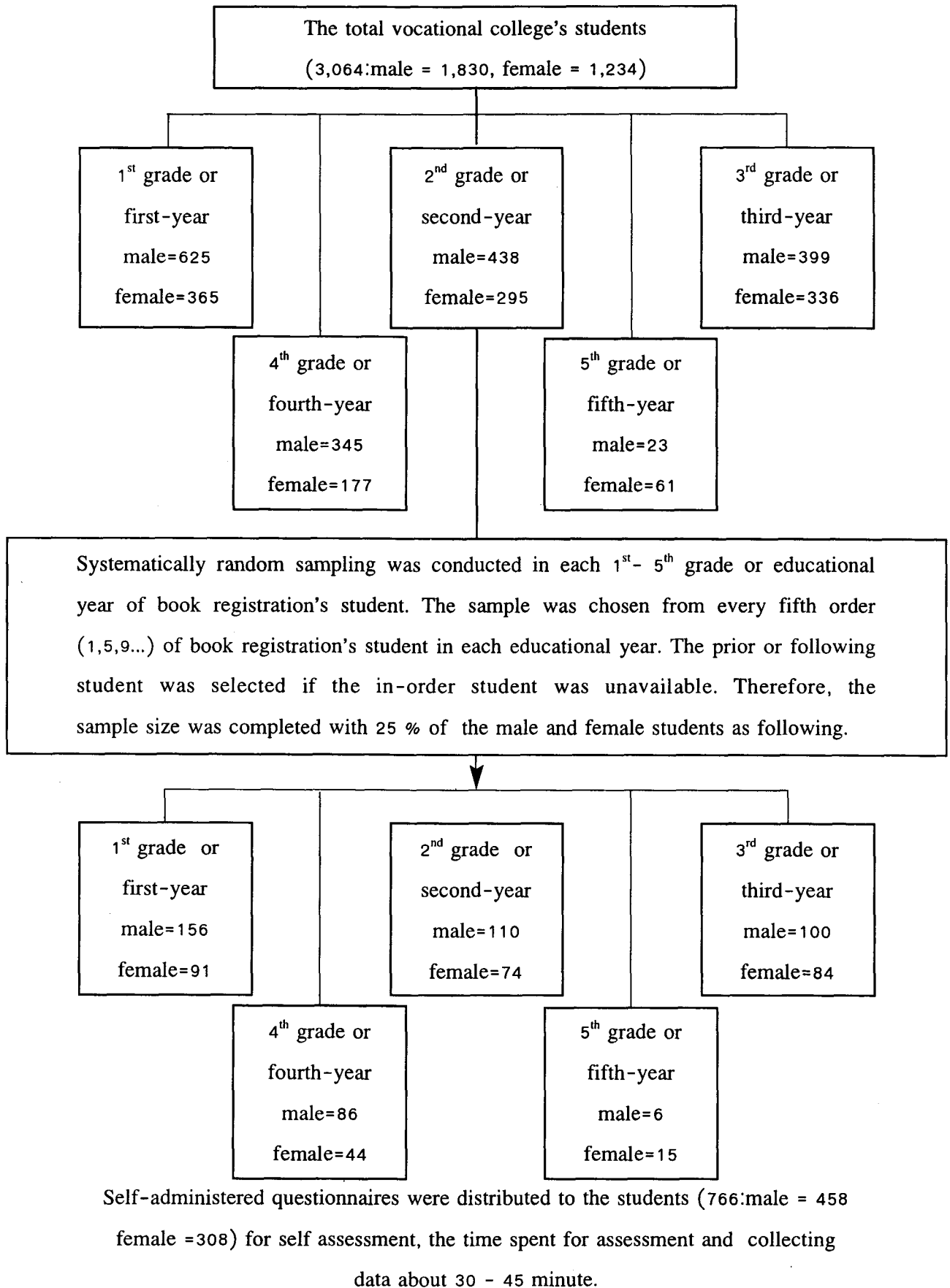


Table 1. Number and percentage of the population and sample by sex and grade or educational year.

Grade or educational Year	Male			Female			Total		
	Pop.	Sample		Pop.	Sample		Pop.	Sample	
		25% completed(%)			25% completed(%)			25% completed(%)	
1st	625	156	164 (26.2)	365	91	81 (22.2)	990	247	245 (24.7)
2nd	438	110	87 (19.9)	295	74	63 (21.4)	733	184	150 (20.5)
3rd	399	100	79 (19.8)	336	84	53 (15.8)	735	184	132 (18.0)
4th	345	86	59 (17.1)	177	44	34 (19.2)	522	130	93 (17.8)
5th	23	6	4 (17.4)	61	15	12 (19.7)	84	21	16 (19.0)
Total	1830	458	393 (21.5)	1234	308	243 (19.7)	3064	766	636 (20.8)

Analysis

We tested the differences of response between the male and female youths with the X^2 -test, Fisher's Exact test (in case the Expected value of the X^2 -test less than five more than 20%) and the T-test. We assessed statistical significance using a criterion of $p \leq 0.05$.

Results

There was no significant difference between the male and female youths with respect to age, religion and educational level ($p > 0.05$)

Sexual experience

As shown in table 2, males had intercourse more than the females (17.9% and 3.7% respectively) and there was statistically significant difference ($p < 0.0001$). The sexual experience of the students having had intercourse (70 males and 9 females) revealed that the age at first intercourse of males was 12 years and of females was 15 years. 22.1% of the male students had their first intercourse with a prostitute while the majority of them had first intercourse with a girlfriend, peer,

causal person, or neighbor. Close friends or close relatives caused most of the pressure for the intercourse of the males (51.5%). While for half of the female youths (3 cases) it occurred due to alcohol drinking. 6.1% of the male students (3

cases) reported STD infections. One half of the students did not use condoms the first time they had sexual relations and male contraception was used more often than female methods.

Table 2. Sexual experience reported by the vocational college youths.

Sexual experience	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Intercourse						
ever	70	17.9	9	3.7	79	12.5
never	321	82.1	232	96.3	553	87.5
Fisher's Exact Test; p<0.001						
Age at first intercourse (Year)						
12 -14	10	15.6	0	0.0	10	14.4
15-17	41	64.4	5	100.0	46	66.6
18-19	10	15.6	0	0.0	10	14.4
20-22	3	4.8	0	0.0	3	4.2
T-test; p = 0.919	$\bar{X} \pm SD$		16.1 \pm 2.0		16.2 \pm 0.8	
First intercourse with whom						
- boy/girlfriend/peer/causal person/neighbor	53	77.9	6	100.0	59	79.7
- prostitute	15	22.1	0	0.0	15	20.3
Fisher's Exact Test ; p < 0.0001						
Pressure for the first intercourse						
- close friend/close relative	35	51.5	1	16.7	36	48.6
- video/movies/pornography	14	20.6	0	0.0	14	19.0
- alcohol drinking	9	13.2	3	50.0	12	16.2
- closeness relation/being in love/sexually permissive	10	14.7	2	33.3	12	16.2
Fisher's Exact-Test; p < 0.0001						

Table 2. (cont).

Sexual experience	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Condom use at first intercourse						
Yes	35	50.0	3	50.0	38	50.0
No	35	50.0	3	50.0	38	50.0
Contraceptive use						
- Alway/sometime	29	41.4	7	77.8	36	45.6
- Never	41	58.6	2	22.2	43	54.4
Fisher's Exact Test ; p<0.05						
Contraceptive method						
Condom	20	69.0	0	0 0.0	20	66.7
Oral pill/safe period	9	31.0	1	100.0	10	33.3
Fisher's Exact ; p < 0.0001						
Sexual Transmitted Diseases (STDs)						
Ever	3	6.1	0	0.0	3	5.5
Never	46	93.9	6	100.0	52	94.3
Fisher's Exact Test ; p < 0.0001						
Sexual release						
Ever	224	60.1	8	3.4	232	38.1
Never	149	39.9	228	96.6	377	61.9
$X^2 = 196.8 \quad df = 1 \quad p < 0.0001$						
Channel for sexual release						
- Intercourse	38	17.4	1	12.5	39	17.2
- Exercise	48	21.9	2	25.0	50	22.0
- Masturbation/exercise/music lesson	100	45.7	3	37.5	103	45.4
- music lesson/movies/radio/travelling	26	11.9	1	12.5	27	11.9
- Intercourse/exercise/masturbation/a music	7	3.2	1	12.5	8	3.5
Fisher's Exact-Test; p < 0.0001						

For the total sample, 60.1% of the male students and 3.4% of the female students experienced sexual release. There was a statistically significant difference between these two groups ($p < 0.0001$). The most common channels for sexual release were masturbation, exercise, and music (45.7% of the males, 37.5% of the females) and there was significant difference between the male and female samples ($p < 0.0001$).

Sexual stimuli

It was found that the male and female youths had statistically significant differences with sexual desire and alcohol drinking ($p < 0.0001$). However, being in love and being the opposite sex of a special close friend did not show a difference between both sexes ($p > 0.05$) see table 3.

Table 3. Sexual stimuli reported by the vocational college youths.

Sexual stimuli	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Sexual desire(times/week)						
> 4	28	7.8	1	0.6	29	5.6
2-3	161	44.8	12	7.6	173	33.5
1	170	47.4	144	91.7	314	60.9
$X^2 = 90.40 \quad df = 2 \quad p < 0.0001$						
Being in love						
Yes	121	31.3	63	26.8	184	29.6
No	266	68.7	172	73.2	438	70.4
$X^2 = 1.39 \quad df = 1 \quad p = 0.24$						
being the opposite sex of a special close friend						
Yes	174	44.3	99	40.7	273	42.9
No	219	55.7	144	59.3	363	57.1
$X^2 = 0.77 \quad df = 1 \quad p = 0.38$						
Alcohol drinking						
Always	12	3.1	0	0.0	12	1.9
Sometime	162	41.5	33	13.8	195	31.0
Never	216	55.4	207	86.3	423	67.1
$X^2 = 65.53 \quad df = 2 \quad p < 0.0001$						

Leisure behavior

Table 4 displays leisure behavior. The majority (33.3%) of the leisure behavior of male youths was sports while 47.1% of the female

youths watched television. The leisure behaviors of male and female youths was significantly different ($p < 0.0001$).

Table 4. Leisure behavior reported by the vocational college youths.

Leisure behavior	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Sporting	130	33.3	21	8.7	151	23.9
Music	60	15.4	22	9.1	82	3.0
Singing	38	9.7	48	19.8	86	13.6
Drawing and painting	30	7.7	8	3.3	38	6.0
Watching television	81	20.8	114	47.1	195	30.9
Video	12	3.1	4	1.7	16	2.5
Gardening/reading/talking/house keeping/pet caring/video game	39	10.0	25	10.3	64	10.1

$X^2 = 93.29$ $df = 6$ $p < 0.0001$

Discussion

These data demonstrate that the percentages of sexual activity among the youth samples (12.5%) were decreased compared with the last 2 to 8 years study in Thailand ranged from 23 percents⁽²⁾ to 33 percents⁽³⁾ of unmarried young adults who are sexually active. Its might be these young people has led to increased support for AIDS-prevention programs, which provided information to young people at high risk, focus on helping young people plan productive lives and reducing the risks of sex for young people. Furthermore, the larger percentages of the male samples (17.9%) report being sexually active

than do the female samples (3.7%), and the male samples begin sexual activity earlier. Still, in many parts of the world premarital sexual activity is common among young people. Its prevalence varies by gender and socioeconomic class. For example, in Africa among kenyan students surveyed in the late 1980s, 48% of males in primary school and 69% of males in secondary school were sexually active, compared with 17% and 27% of girls in primary and secondary schools.⁽⁴⁾ In Asia, where fewer studies have been conducted, data for Hong Kong, South Korea, and Thailand show that fewer than 10% of unmarried women under age 24 have experienced

intercourse.⁽⁴⁾ Young men may exaggerate, reflecting cultural norms that encourage and approve of sexual experimentation for boys, while young women may underreport their sexual activity because of cultural norms that value virginity for girls. On the other hand, social values urge a young woman to remain chaste until marriage—in thought as well as deed. She is likely to hear from her parents and her teachers, if they broach the subject at all, that sex is proper in marriage only. Cultural values and social pressures affect young men, too. Most societies maintain a double standard about sexuality, condoning or even promoting premarital sex for men while condemning it for women. In some cultures young men are encouraged to have sex early to “prove their manhood”.⁽⁸⁾

In Latin America, average age at first intercourse ranged from 13 to 16 years for boys and from 16 to 18 years for girls.⁽⁴⁾ The median age for initiating sexual intercourse among adolescent men average about one year earlier than that of women.⁽⁵⁾ While average age at first intercourse of this study was 16.1 years for the males and 16.2 years for the females. Similarly, other study of young adults in Thailand reported average age 16 years⁽²⁾ and 16.2 years.⁽⁶⁾

Nevertheless, some male samples start sex at an earlier age (12 years), probably because they rank sex as a higher priority; they are more likely to be proud of their sexual experience.⁽⁴⁾ Sexual activity may be the clearest measure of

masculinity that a boy sees consistently applied. Boys are taught to be sexually aggressive and to view sex as a contest in which winning means convincing, and so first intercourse often serve as initiation into adulthood.⁽⁴⁾ If a boy does not have sex by an “appropriate age,” his friends and family may question his masculinity. For example, in a study in Thailand some girls said that a boy who does not visit prostitutes must be homosexual.⁽⁴⁾

One half of all of the students did not use contraceptives the first time they had sexual relations. Of those who used contraception, male methods were the overwhelming choice, as reported by most males.

The fact that male methods were frequently used by those males who do use a condom during their first intercourse has relevance for sexual transmitted diseases as the condom acts as a barrier against the spread of STDs.⁽⁷⁾ Only 6.1% of the males reported STD infections.

The reasons for not using contraception during first intercourse are likely to be as follows. The intercourse was not planned, they did not know about contraceptives, they did not want to use contraceptives, they did not think about using contraceptives, contraceptives were not available, and pregnancy or STDs was thought to be impossible,^(4,7) if they are very young, if they are having sex for the first time, or if they have intercourse infrequently.⁽⁸⁾

Few unmarried young couples use contra-

ception the first time that they have sexual intercourse. In one study in Thailand reported only 27% of young adult use condom the first time that they have sex.⁽⁶⁾ Among women ages 15 to 24 surveyed in Latin America and the Caribbean, the levels of contraceptive use at first intercourse ranged from 4% in Quito to 43% in Jamaica. For men 15 to 24, the percentages using contraception at first intercourse ranged from 14% in Quito and Guayaquil to 31% in Mexico City.⁽⁴⁾ Furthermore, social attitudes that condemn girls who plan for sex, combined with perceptions that planning for sex spoils romance, may not stop sexual activity but may inhibit contraceptive use. Such attitudes increase girls' vulnerability sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and pregnancy.⁽⁴⁾

Less than one fourth of the male students had their first intercourse with a prostitute compared with 9%⁽⁶⁾ and 16%⁽³⁾ of the previous study in Thailand. They took a chance to catch STDs and AIDS.

The majority of the pressure for the first intercourse of the male samples were induced by close friend or close relative but the female samples were induced by alcohol drinking. In contrast, other study reported experimenting^(2,6) and loving⁽⁶⁾ was the major pressure. Supported with the fact of at adolescence, the peer group rivals and even subplants the family as a source of social influence. Not surprisingly, peers have been found to influence a range of behaviors

including sexuality.^(5,7,9) The sexual behavior of adolescent boys and girls are influenced by the sexual behavior of best, same-sex friends and of close friends of both sexes.^(5,7,9) Friends may be an even more important source for young men than for young women.⁽⁴⁾ While girls in many societies receive information from mothers or aunts, boys are less likely to talk to family members about sexual matters. Most rely on friends or the mass media for information.⁽⁴⁾ Furthermore, peer pressure appears to influence boys' sexual behavior and contraceptive use more strongly than girls'.⁽⁴⁾ Boys may be encouraged by peers and even family members to become sexually active or to go to prostitutes, while girls are admonished to remain chaste.⁽⁴⁾ Young people are more apt to engage in unplanned and unprotected sexual activity after drinking.^(7,8) In a Swedish study involving sexually active adolescents, 40% of the young women and 63% of the young men reported that they had been drinking at the time of first intercourse.⁽⁸⁾

Male and female youths differ in the nature of their sexual desire, sexual release success and other channels for sexual release. As a result, there is a sexual double standard in the social norm.⁽¹⁰⁾

Sports as a channel for sexual releases should be provided to males. Information provided via the television is a way to reach almost all youths and their families.⁽⁷⁾ Also they should be made aware of contraceptive use.

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